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ABSTRACT

Service learning is an innovation gaining momentum in U.S. education. A case study was conducted to learn how and why one teacher in a first-year, grant-funded service learning program, cosponsored by an inner-city school district, used literacy in the classroom. Semistructured interviews and classroom observations were used over an 8-month period to gain insight into this teacher's daily experiences in the classroom, focusing on: (1) how the teacher's personal goals influenced literacy instruction; (2) how the literacy instruction was influenced by content area curriculum goals and grant agendas; and (3) how the literacy instruction was influenced by systematic constraints. Qualitative analysis reveals that personal goals for literacy activities with real world purpose were significantly influenced by content area curriculum goals and grant goals, veering literacy instruction into more of an academic direction. Also, due to constraints imposed by the school calendar, no time was available at the beginning of the school year to assess each student's literacy background or level of literacy relative to service-learning curriculum goals and teacher expectations. These results are discussed relative to new possibilities for literacy research and teaching. (Contains 42 references.) (Author/SLD)

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From the "War Room" to the Classroom:
Understanding the Perceptions and Practices of a Literacy Teacher
in an Urban High School Service-Learning Program

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Running head: UNDERSTANDING PERCEPTIONS AND PRACTICES

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Abstract

Service-learning is an educational innovation gaining momentum in American education. In order to understand the dimensions of this new curriculum relative to literacy instruction, my case study focused on the day-to-day experiences of one teacher attempting to implement a service-learning curriculum. The purpose of this case study was to learn how and why one teacher in a first-year, grant-funded service-learning program, co-sponsored by an inner-city school district, used literacy in the classroom. Semi-structured interviews and classroom observations were used over an eight-month period to gain insights into this teacher's daily experiences in the classroom. To better understand my observations and the stories that were told to me, three questions were used to frame this case study: (1) How do one teacher's personal goals influence literacy instruction in the service-learning classroom? (2) How is this literacy instruction influenced by content area curriculum goals and grant agendas? and (3) How is this literacy instruction influenced by systematic constraints? Qualitative analysis revealed that personal goals for literacy activities with real world purpose were significantly influenced by content area curriculum goals and grant goals, veering literacy instruction into more of an academic direction. Also, due to constraints imposed by the school calendar, no time was available at the beginning of the school year to assess each student's literacy background and/or level of literacy relative to service-learning curriculum goals and teacher expectations. These results are discussed relative to new possibilities for literacy research and teaching.

**From the “War Room” to the Classroom:
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Light pours through the large windows of the classroom, illuminating an atmosphere for teaching and learning that is very different; it is certainly a departure from the traditional teacher-centered, desks-in-rows educational model that has dominated American public education during most of this century: a pair of students open the large, wood-framed classroom doors with a pile of papers in hand, “Back in a minute,” they say. “This line art needs to be scanned in;” several groups of students huddle around computers, writing collaboratively; two teachers stand near a desk positioned in the back of the room, discussing tomorrow’s field trip to the city council meeting; a representative from the city beautification program sits at a table surrounded by students, proofreading copy for a brochure the group has prepared for him.

This scene was recorded in my field notes during a visit to the Clifton Program, an urban service-learning program.¹ It reminded me that a new paradigm was emerging from one that, for many years, viewed literacy as a set of general skills that people carried around with them from one social context to another.

The emerging paradigm is based on a sociocultural definition of literacy (Scribner & Cole, 1981; Gee, 1996). Unlike the general skills paradigm (Gough, 1972; Singer, 1985), a sociocultural view of literacy emphasizes the importance of both context and culture on literacy development:

¹ The name of the program and all names of informants are pseudonyms

Literacy is not simply knowing how to read and write a particular script, but applying this knowledge for specific purposes in specific contexts of use. The nature of these practices, including of course their technological aspects, will determine the kinds of skills (consequences) associated with literacy (Scribner & Cole, 1981, p. 236).

The social practices children engage in for access to oral and written language vary according to membership within a particular community (Heath, 1983; Fishman, 1987) and according to functional roles within a particular social context (Barnes & Barnes, 1990; Reder, 1992). Thus, literacy practices are socially negotiated, a product of meaningful interaction within a particular setting. Many service-learning programs across America emphasize such constructivist principles.

Service-learning: Definitions and distinctions

Like many of the new service-learning programs emerging in American education, the classroom described previously is one significant outcome of the sociocultural literacy movement, an influence that is evident in how service-learning is popularly defined. For instance the National and Community Service Act of 1990, federal legislation that paved the way for the funding of many service-learning programs in public education, defines service-learning as a method

1. in which students learn and develop through active participation in thoughtfully organized service experiences that meet actual community needs and that are coordinated in collaboration with the school and community;

2. that provides students with opportunities to use newly acquired skills and knowledge in real-life situations in their own communities;
3. and that is integrated into the students' academic curriculum or provides structure time for the student to think, talk, or write about what the student did and saw during the actual service activity (National and Community Service Act, 1990, p. 3131).

Service-learning curricula, then, combine community service with purposeful study. For example, students may work at a local homeless shelter as they study the socioeconomic factors that contribute to homelessness, and keep a journal in which they analyze incongruities between their original perceptions of the homeless and their personal experiences working in a homeless shelter.

The distinctions among service-learning curricula

Because there are many forms of service-learning, it is important to note that service-learning experiences may act as elements of existing academic courses or become the focus of a separate course outside the traditional curriculum. When service-learning acts as an element of an existing course, students may clean polluted landscapes as they study soil erosion in science class (Anderson, Kinsley, Negroni & Price, 1991); they may assist in local construction projects to learn technical skills for vocational classes (Gomez, 1996); or they may raise money for food banks, while studying world hunger in social studies (Ruggenberg, 1993). When service-learning lies outside of the traditional curriculum, students may work at a single service site or a number of service sites over the course of a semester. Classroom activities are designed to foster discussion and reflection

about the relationships between what is learned in the field and what is learned in school (Batchelder & Root, 1994; Giles & Eyler, 1994; Shumer, 1994).

Another important distinction relative to service-learning involves the differences between social service and social action. Social service projects are helpful in building students' self-esteem and fostering compassion towards others. Such projects are "highly personalized" because students become "directly involved in a particular situation" such as peer-counseling, distributing food to the poor, and visiting the elderly (Goodman, Baron, Belcher, Hastings-Heinz, & James, 1994, p. 56).

Service-learning that involves social action, on the other hand, is predicated on the belief that solving community problems is an integral part of education:

The starting point for organizing the program content of education or political action must be the present, existential, concrete situation, reflecting the aspirations of the people. Utilizing certain basic contradictions, we must pose this existential, concrete, present situation to the people as a problem which challenges them and requires a response—not just at the intellectual level, but at the level of action (Freire, 1970, p. 85).

In a social action model, education is put to practical use as students transfer their classroom learning into action designed to solve a problem of personal significance. In some service-learning projects, social action has taken the form of a public manifesto in support of women's rights (Fiore & Elsasser, 1982), the formation of a lobbying group to ban plastics (Kinsley, 1993), and congressional testimony that led to the reauthorization of the Clean Water Act (Pomata, 1994). Students become more than service providers,

helping the needy; they become authors, lobbyists, activists, and educators, working towards social improvement. Since my study focuses on a service-learning program that is based on a social service model, service-learning is defined as social service for the purposes of this study, not social action.

Most studies of service-learning curricula implementation focus on the social service model (MacNeil & Krensky, 1996; Seigel, 1995; Serow & Bitting, 1995; Batchelder & Root, 1994; Boss, 1994; Brill, 1994; Giles & Eyler, 1994; Gorman, Duffy, & Hefferman, 1994; Miller, 1994; Shumer, 1994; Bringle & Kremer, 1993; Kinsley, 1993; Markus, Howard, & King, 1993), whereas a few studies focus on the social action model of service-learning (Goodman, Baron, Belcher, Hastings-Heinz, & James, 1994; Wade, 1993). This study adds to the body of research on programs that use a social service model.

Significance of study

Service-learning is quickly moving into the mainstream of American education (Serow, Calleson, & Parker, 1996), involving greater numbers of youth in community service (Serow, 1991). Continued research and development is important to the sustained growth and improvement of service-learning (Serow, 19997). Studies of classroom teachers who use service-learning are of particular importance because their skill and knowledge play a part in the success of service-learning projects (Nathan & Kielsmeier, 1991). Unfortunately, “only a few studies have focused on public school teachers’ experiences with service-learning” (Wade, 1997, p. 77). These studies provide information on service-learning and assessment (Wade & Yarbrough, 1996), the positive impact of service-learning as an instructional strategy (Kinsley, 1993; Wade, 1993;

Goodman, Baron, Belcher, Hastings-Heinz, & James, 1994; Wade, 1995a), community benefits derived from service-learning (Seigel, 1995), and the characteristics of service-learning teachers (Wade, 1997). Unfortunately, as the following review of the literature demonstrates, little is known about how and why teachers use literacy in the service-learning classroom.

Characteristics of service-learning teachers

Of the studies that focus on service-learning teachers, one provides an important teacher profile. Survey data (Wade, 1997) reveal that of those teachers involved with service-learning, most are motivated by the belief that it is important to instill in students an awareness of social responsibility and a sense of caring. Additional survey data from the study suggests that most teachers involved with service-learning also have previous experience providing service to others through their family, community, or school, although many are new to service-learning teaching, and have little experience implementing a service-learning curriculum.

The Wade survey research reveals an insightful profile of teachers who are most likely to be involved with service-learning. These are teachers who have little previous experience implementing a service-learning curriculum, but a history of performing community service through other social institutions such as the church; they also have a strong belief in fostering a sense of caring and social responsibility in students. Although the survey design Wade uses lends itself well to creating a general profile of service-learning teachers, the data provide few insights into personal goals for literacy development in the service-learning classroom. Such knowledge would help literacy

researchers better understand why teachers use literacy instruction in the service-learning classroom.

Service-learning and teacher planning

Studies of service-learning teachers also reveal the rewards and difficulties associated with the planning of service-learning activities. Planning service-learning instruction is rewarding for some teachers because instructional activities allow them to create an “ethos” of caring in the classroom or school due to the fact that unlike many traditional classroom activities, service-learning activities are not “ends in themselves” (Goodman, Baron, Belcher, Hastings-Heinz, & James, 1994, p. 46). Also, it is possible to tailor service-learning projects to students’ interests and thus, easier to build in components that allow students to take ownership of their work (Goodman, Baron, Belcher, Hastings-Heinz, & James, 1994; Wade, 1997).

Unfortunately, the planning of service-learning activities is often problematic for teachers because the planning process requires additional time. When portfolios are used for assessment, additional time is needed to visualize how the elements of a portfolio will work in concert with service experiences (Wade & Yarbrough, 1996), and in general, additional time is needed during the planning period to establish collaborative partnerships between the school and community (Wade, 1997). Also, compared to traditional courses, assembling materials for service-learning activities requires more time (Wade, 1997).

Studies of service-learning and teacher planning suggest that service-learning activity planning allows teachers to consider instructional goals that promote human values in addition to cognitive outcomes, and it allows them to create activities that build on their students’ interests. These studies also indicate that service-learning planning

takes more time due to the greater variety of materials needed for activities and the need to develop partnerships with community businesses and agencies ahead of time.

Unfortunately, these studies provide little information on how literacy instruction in the service-learning classroom is influenced by grant goals, and/or content area curriculum goals. Such information could help teachers better understand how to negotiate curricular conflicts that may arise when multiple constituencies come together to sponsor a service-learning program.

Service-learning and curriculum implementation

There is evidence that rewards and difficulties exist at the implementation phase of service-learning instruction as well. One important plus for service-learning teachers is that they often receive recognition for their work from colleagues, parents, and others in the community when a service-learning curriculum is implemented; more importantly, many of these teachers enjoy the increases they witness in students' motivation during the implementation phase (Wade, 1997). Playing a part in something that benefits the community in a positive way is also rewarding for service-learning teachers (Seigel, 1995). Such rewards are offset by problems such as the need for transportation and additional adult help, important resources often necessary for the successful implementation of service-learning activities at the service sites (Wade, 1995a). Providing additional time for students to reflect on their experiences is difficult as well, as is resolving the conflicts that sometimes occur when the school and service sites have different goals (Kinsley, 1993).

This sub-strand of studies reveals that implementing a service-learning curriculum provides some benefits and challenges not usually evident in traditional classrooms. There is evidence that working more closely with school administrators, fellow teachers, and

citizens in the community makes the work of teachers more visible to others, leading to greater recognition when success is achieved. Also, there is evidence that the positive benefits to both students and the community provide teachers with a sense of self-satisfaction. At the same time, research also shows that teachers need additional resources and time to successfully implement a service-learning curriculum. Unfortunately, none of the studies in this sub-strand look at teachers' experiences on a daily basis; therefore, it is hard to identify with any certainty how systematic constraints influence literacy instruction in the service-learning classroom. Such information would help teachers better understand how such obstacles impact literacy instruction in the service-learning classroom.

Thus, research on the involvement of teachers with service-learning reveals a profile of those teachers most likely to be involved with service-learning, the rewards of planning and implementing service-learning curricula, and the difficulties of planning and implementing service-learning curricula. However, little is known about how personal goals, content area curriculum goals, grant agendas, and systematic constraints influence literacy instruction in the service-learning classroom.

Purpose of this study

This case study seeks to explore the perceptions and practices of, Phil, a high school English teacher who is working through the planning and implementation challenges of a service-learning curriculum. The purpose of this case study was to learn how and why Phil used literacy in the classroom. The following research questions served as a frame for my study: (1) How do Phil's personal goals influence his literacy instruction? (2) How is Phil's literacy instruction influenced by content area curriculum

goals and grant agendas? and (3) How is his literacy instruction influenced by systematic constraints?

Methods

Setting

The setting for my case study is an inner-city school district located in the city of Lakewood. Lakewood is a metropolitan area located in the Northeast with a population of approximately 200,000. It used to be a vibrant industrial center, but now many of its manufacturing plants and downtown stores are vacant. A large percentage of the city's industry and population relocated to the Sun-Belt during the 1970's and 80's.

At the time of my study, the Clifton Program was a grant-funded urban service-learning program operating in its first year. The program, designed for high school seniors, was co-sponsored by the Lakewood City School District and by a team of professors from a large university nearby who received a federal grant to fund the program. The Clifton Program was housed in a vacant building that once served as the public library for the city of Lakewood. The large pillared two-story building was purchased by the Lakewood City School District and remodeled; it now contains three large classrooms, a meeting room for teachers, and administrative offices. Every weekday afternoon for an hour, student volunteers from each of the city's four public high schools were bused to the Clifton building; it is centrally located within walking distance to many of the service sites used by the students.

The Clifton Program integrates senior English and Participation in Government classes into a semester-long project-based course. Approximately every six weeks, students rotate among one of three interdisciplinary classrooms that emphasize

connections between social studies and English. Two classrooms emphasize the legislative branch of government and technology skills relative to the subject matter, whereas the other focuses on the judicial branch of government, research skills, and communication skills.

During the first half of the semester (ten weeks), students participate in activities in which they explore the conceptual parameters of what it means to be a citizen. Topics such as democracy, public and private interest, as well as policy-making are covered. Students spend the final portion of the semester working on their “Community-Link” projects. These are projects in which students work collaboratively with representatives from local government and service agencies, helping them solve problems by conducting research, proposing solutions, and implementing a plan of action designed to solve the problem. For example, one group of students observed during the study designed and developed a brochure for the city housing authority. The brochure advertised a green-space beautification program aimed at inner-city residents. Another group of students designed a web site for an animal shelter, advertising its program for placing homeless dogs and cats with new owners.

The physical arrangement of the classrooms at the Clifton Program is very different than those of most schools. Students sit in groups at tables, rather than at desks situated in rows. There are also computers on many of these tables. Students work cooperatively or collaboratively for most activities, and take turns using the computers.

Informants

Phil, the primary informant for my case study, is a veteran teacher of fourteen years; he teaches English at a nearby inner-city high school, supervises the school’s drama

club, and works at the Clifton Program in the afternoon. He shares his classroom at the Clifton Program with Fran, a social studies teacher who also served as an informant for this study from time-to-time. Students at the Clifton Program served as a source of information for the study as well. There are approximately forty students in the program. The student population is made up of individuals from the following racial categories: European-Americans (51%), African-Americans (44%), Asian, Middle-Eastern, and Latino students (5%).

Theoretical framework

My case study is informed by a theory of “symbolic interactionism” (Blumer, 1969). A basic tenet of this theory suggests that all situations acquire their meaning through the process of human interpretation. The meaning of a particular situation is not built into it, but rather produced by our reaction to it, meaning that all human experience is an exercise in sense-making based on our social interactions. Thus, based on Blumer’s perspective, every literate action is meaningful within a particular social context, and each social context is made up of both language convention and social relations, which combine to create a social practice negotiated through social interaction.

Data Collection

From the outset, my role as a researcher was made explicit to the building principal, all teachers, and the students. The data are taken from naturally occurring events observed in the classroom and from interviews conducted with the teachers in the classroom. I visited the Clifton Program a total of twelve times over an eight month period, and conducted three semi-structured interviews, two with Phil and one with Fran. I took field notes during each visit to document classroom practices, and recorded each interview with audiotape. After each

interview, I prepared transcripts of the audiotape. I also collected classroom artifacts such as teacher-prepared materials (e.g., assignments and informational handouts).

Data Analysis

Eventually, a preliminary open-ended analytical coding scheme was developed to analyze the data. A typology of codes was organized relative to the uses of reading and writing in the classroom, Phil's perceptions of literacy, instructional goals, and implementation problems. These codes were used to help me identify recurring trends in the data (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). Coding was done electronically with a word processing program. The word processing program was used to manage and sort the 300 pages of data collected during the study. Once the data was sorted, the constant comparative method of data analysis (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) helped me connect emerging subcategories and categories of data. My findings in the results section of this paper are based on the connections made among these categories of data.

Results

"You don't make a kid do something for pretend"

One of Phil's major goals is to provide students with real world literacy experiences so that they "develop thinking and technical skills in an environment that approximates what they will experience once they get out into the working world." Phil is a teacher who believes that "you don't make a kid do something for pretend." He feels that "they're going to have to learn sometime. Why not now?" Real world purpose is not only emphasized by Phil when teaching at the Clifton Program, but it is something that he says is "just my style . . . wherever I am." Hence, Phil places a lot of emphasis on the educational value of real world purpose.

In the classroom, Phil tries to create an atmosphere that approximates the workplace. Phil often mentions that his classroom at the Clifton Program is “just like the real world with people yelling across the room at each other;” it’s a place where Phil encourages his students to use the computer technology available in the classroom because “when they [his students] get into the world, they’re going to have to deal with the real desktop and they’re going to have access.” Thus, Phil’s real world philosophy is evident in the atmosphere he tries to create in the classroom.

Phil also assigns each student a role when working in groups because he believes “group work is always inherent in every job setting.” For example, one student may serve as the group recorder, taking notes relative to each group discussion, whereas another might gather research materials. Phil often assigns students roles when working in groups because it allows him to hold them “accountable” and “nail them” just like in the real world. Phil’s real world philosophy, then, is visible through the teaching methods he uses as well.

Phil’s real world philosophy is also evident in the literacy activities he uses in the classroom. Phil refers to these activities as “white collar stuff.”

We do white collar stuff. And so if somebody wants a mailing list, of course, we research it. If someone wants a brochure, we research it. If somebody wants a web page, or a directory, or some ideas about why a program isn’t working, or which program is the best, we do that too. All of those require some kind of information gathering. So we’re really preparing these kids for some kind of information management career.

Phil’s use of the phrase “we’re really preparing these kids for some kind of information management career” illustrates a belief that students are learning real world skills,

skills that are necessary for the growing number of information-based careers now present in the job market

Literacy instruction with real world purpose is obviously important to Phil; however, he must consider other goals as well, goals that veer literacy instruction away from his real world intentions. Although Phil tries to place an emphasis on activities with real world purpose, content area curriculum goals and grant goals for the final portfolio of student work challenge him along these lines, inducing him to include literacy activities that are primarily performed for academic purposes.

“What are we supposed to do?”

The influence of grant goals on Phil’s literacy instruction is evident in his use of weekly reflective journals. According to Phil, students must “write a reflective essay on community-link; they have a reflective essay on their community service, and they also have a reflective essay on the work in their portfolios.” These activities are included because grant goals specify that students use reflective writing to analyze their learning experiences during the semester.

According to Phil, due to the grant goals for the inclusion of reflection, some literacy activities must be designed to help students learn how to write reflectively:

They [his students] don’t have a lot of experiences asking questions writing reflectively. . . I guess the journals serve as a vehicle for reflection – almost training them to do reflection. Because at the end we [the teachers at the Clifton Program and the grant sponsors] want them to reflect on the portfolio and be able to say, ‘Well I put this in my portfolio for other reasons other than because it was assigned.’

Phil's use of the words "training them to do reflection" indicates a belief that these weekly journal entries are used to prepare students for the reflective pieces specified by grant goals.

Phil's instructions to the class during a group assignment reveal that literacy activities designed to foster group decision-making are also used in the classroom:

Take a few minutes to read the instructions. You should be working to make a decision by consensus. This is because if you take a vote, each person in the group needs to feel that their voice is important. Agreement needs to be made among all members of your group.

Phil's use of the phrase "you should be working to make a decision by consensus" illustrate that he expects his students to learn how to use oral language to make a decision within their groups.

According to Phil, such group activities are included due to grant goals for collaborative learning:

The grant asks us [the teachers at the Clifton Program] to get them [the students] working in groups. We teach them how to work collaboratively, how to come to a consensus—because many of them are not used to working in groups.

Phil's use of the phrase "the grant asks us" indicates his belief that at times, grant goals are driving literacy instruction with respect to oral language as well.

Literacy instruction in Phil's classroom is also influenced by content area curriculum goals for Participation in Government, a social studies class for high school

seniors. Reading, writing, and oral language are used to help students understand the processes associated with government policy-making.

One policy-making assignment connects reading and oral language. First, students read about the steps involved in formulating public policy, and then they discuss the government's role in issuing policy for the workplace. Fran, the social studies teacher who works with Phil, describes the purpose of this assignment in her instructions to the class:

Remember there are five steps in formulating public policy. What is the role of government to take to insure safety in the workplace. You have materials that pertain to background and history. After you have found information on background and history, discuss its relevance and performance in the community. Look for facts in each argument. You will be given credit for these. After you have looked at the facts and talked about their relationship to performance in the community look at the effects on society and quality of life -- listen carefully -- do one step at a time -- then state your recommendations for public policy.

Fran's question "What is the role of government to take to insure safety in the workplace?" and her statement that students should make "recommendations for public policy" illustrates that this activity is designed to help students focus on the role of the government in creating public policy.

In a related policy-making assignment, students use reading, writing, and oral language to develop a policy for teen curfews. Students analyze and compare local curfew policies from other communities in the United States, and then work in groups to

draft their own teen curfew policies. These policies are presented orally to the class, and these oral presentations are graded by Phil and Fran.

According to Phil, these policy assignments are driven by content area “state curricular issues that have to do with understanding the legislative processes of drafting public policy,” and teaching students “just how things work in the legislative branch of government.” Phil’s use of the words “curricular issues” underscores his notion that students’ reading, writing, and speaking about public policy satisfies content area curriculum goals for the teaching of legislative processes in government.

Biography assignments that students complete early in the semester are also influenced by content area curriculum goals for social studies. Students are asked to read a biography about a famous person and then summarize what they have learned from their reading. Phil’s instructions to the class about the biography assignment underscore its purpose:

The biography will help you see the differences between public and private interest before you move onto the community link project. What I am explaining to you, you need to explain to us. What are the characteristics of the people you are writing about in your biographies? You need to put what you learned into a format so that we can understand what you learned – summarize.”

Phil’s use of the words “help you see the difference between public and private interest” indicate that the purpose of the biography assignment is conceptual in nature.

Differentiating between the concepts of public and private interest is a function of the curriculum. According to Fran, the social studies teacher who works with Phil, one of the major ideas emphasized in senior level Participation in Government classes is the “difference between public and private interest, so students understand their role as citizens.” Because understanding the difference between public and private interest is a function of the course, the reading, writing, and oral language used by students to learn these concepts is a function of the curriculum, and it is conceptual in nature, not based on real world purpose.

Phil’s literacy instruction in the classroom, then, is influenced by grant goals for reflective writing and collaborative learning; it is also influenced by content area curriculum goals for the teaching of legislative processes and the concepts of public versus private interest. In addition to grant and curricular goals, Phil’s literacy instruction is also influenced by systematic constraints.

“It’s damage control with these kids”

Phil has five, one-hour class periods during a twenty week semester to implement the service-learning curriculum. Grant goals and content area curricular goals may influence the direction of Phil’s literacy instruction, periodically; however, according to Phil, time constraints influence the very nature of literacy instruction in his classroom:

In the large measure, it's damage control with these kids. We don't with confidence, know what to anticipate. We didn't have time at the beginning of the semester to find out what everybody knows and what they're supposed to learn. All the dull stuff. And here we are in the middle of our project, and we

don't have time to stop and just say, "O.K. it's time for computer training for everybody," just for kicks. It's not happening. If they need to know layout, then that's what they learn. And they don't learn chart-making for crunching numbers. And if they need to know crunching numbers, then we're not going to teach them how to build a brochure at this point.

Phil's use of the phrase "we don't have time to stop" illustrates his belief that time constraints keep the parameters of literacy instruction very narrow, influencing his attempts to understand student literacy at the onset of the semester and his attempts to offer more comprehensive literacy instruction later in the semester.

Time constraints also influence the nature of instructional planning at the Clifton Program, but in a way that promotes compromise among the teachers that shared lesson planning responsibilities with Phil. Each day all of the teachers at the Clifton Program meet to discuss and plan daily activities. The teachers engage in a process of shared decision-making in which they share ideas on instructional procedures, objectives, and evaluation with respect to each lesson, and then they attempt to arrive at a consensus. According to Phil, time constraints for planning force teachers to negotiate with one another:

I think there are some tensions there sometimes—you know—I want first period free and so my interest is in having first period free—and do I have the right because I want some extra sleep to make school start an extra hour late. There's tensions between what you want and what's best. There are always personality issues in there and other things that we do in self-defense. We call it the 'war room.' We have many battles before we finally come to some sort of consensus on the activities. There's only about an hour for all of this, so

even though each of us has our own agenda, we are forced to exchange in some give and take for the sake of expediency.

Phil's use of the phrases "there's only about an hour" and "we are forced to exchange in some give and take" indicates a belief that time constraints influence the "expediency" of the shared decision-making process among teachers at the Clifton Program, forcing them to arrive at a "consensus" much more quickly.

Discussion

The purpose of this case study was to learn how and why Phil used literacy in the service-learning classroom. The results suggest that many constituencies influenced how and why Phil used literacy. Due to grant goals for reflection and collaborative learning and curriculum goals for the teaching of legislative processes and the concepts of public versus private interest, Phil needed to provide literacy instruction that was academic in nature, despite his personal belief in literacy instruction for real world purposes.

The results of this study highlight the limitations of research on service-learning activities (Goodman, Baron, Belcher, Hastings-Heinz, & James, 1994). The Goodman study shows that many service-learning activities were not "ends in themselves," but it focuses primarily on those service-learning activities that involve community service, and it does not consider literacy. In fact, many of the literacy activities used in Phil's classroom did not involve community service, and these activities were designed to meet specific grant goals and/or content area curriculum goals. For example, journal entries were used to help students practice reflective writing for the sake of meeting grant goals, and the policy-making assignments were designed to teach students about legislative processes, a focus of content area curriculum goals for social studies. Such findings

should help researchers understand that without insight into how and why teachers use literacy in the service-learning classroom, service-learning research is incomplete. Such findings should also help secondary service-learning teachers consider the ways multiple constituencies influence the nature and purpose of literacy instruction, providing them with an understanding of how to balance such goals when planning and implementing literacy instruction in the service-learning classroom.

Time also influenced how and why Phil used literacy in the classroom, constraining his efforts to understand each student's literacy background at the beginning of the semester. Due to the school calendar, Phil had only a limited amount of time to implement his literacy instruction in the service-learning classroom; however, these same time limitations also significantly influenced the efficiency of shared decision-making during the daily planning sessions among teachers at the Clifton Program, forcing them to negotiate and reach a consensus on activities expeditiously.

Results on the problematic nature of time for service-learning curriculum implementation were consistent with previous research on service-learning (Wade, 1997). As in Wade, this case study's findings suggest that time constrained Phil's instruction in the classroom. At the onset of the semester, Phil did not have time to consider how each student's previous uses of literacy related to those literacy practices emphasized by the program curriculum. Due to this time constraint, many students were asked to consider new ways of writing and speaking (e.g., reflective writing and decision-making by consensus) without activities that built on the connections between student literacy practices and those emphasized by the program curriculum. This information is especially important when considering the needs of minority students because in many cases,

minority students come into the classroom with literacy backgrounds that do not prepare them for the uses of literacy emphasized by the school (Gee, 1996; Labov, 1982). If service-learning curricula are to build on the literacy practices of all students, teachers need more than five, one-hour class periods a week for a twenty week period.

The positive nature of time constraints on instructional planning, with respect to group or team decision-making, underscores the limitations of research on teacher beliefs and practices relative to literacy instruction (Alvermann & Hayes, 1989; Wilson, Konopak, & Readence, 1993). Although such studies shed light on the constraints that influence literacy instruction, such research fails to acknowledge how constraints such as time positively impact instructional planning when group decision-making is used. Phil viewed time constraints for instructional planning as a plus because it forced him and the other teachers in the Clifton Program to plan instruction expediently. Such findings suggest that literacy researchers need to focus on both the positive and negative aspects of systematic constraints such as time when group decision-making is used to plan literacy instruction.

Conclusions

Phil's perceptions and practices shed new light on one teacher's literacy instruction in the service-learning classroom. My interviews with Phil and my observations of his classroom suggest that personal goals, grant goals, and content area curriculum goals influenced how and why Phil used literacy instruction. In addition, time constraints had a negative influence on how and why Phil used literacy instruction, but a positive influence on instructional planning when group decision-making was used. Such insights challenge researchers, teachers, and administrators to reconceptualize the nature of literacy

instruction by considering how and why teachers use literacy instruction in the service-learning classroom.

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